

VZCZCXRO6219
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHKP #0067/01 0581009
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 271009Z FEB 09 ZDS ZDK
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0937
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0399
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0226
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0269
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1814
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 2663
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 4546
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUCNFB/FBI WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KARACHI 000067

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDED NOFORN CAPTION)

SIPDIS
NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)
SUBJECT: SINDH - KARACHI POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN
SHOOT-OUT WITH "TERRORISTS"

KARACHI 00000067 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY CONSUL GENERAL STEPHEN FAKAN, REASONS 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Security forces in Karachi suffered casualties during a botched operation against a criminal gang in the Sohrab Goth area of the city. Different Pakistani officials have made different claims as to the reason for, and results of, the operation) including a claim that the gang participated in the November 2008 kidnapping of an Iranian diplomat in Peshawar - but there is no verifiable evidence that an operational terrorist cell was disrupted. The only certainty is that the security forces were no match for the criminals. End Summary

¶2. (U) According to press reports, during the early hours of January 15th, two Karachi police officers were killed and others injured as they assisted Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) and Anti-Violent Crime Unit (AVCU) personnel in an attempt to arrest persons alleged to have been involved in the November 2008 kidnapping of Iranian diplomat Hashmatullah Attar Zadeh in Peshawar (or, according to another official, they were trying to disrupt planned terror activities). In the aftermath of the shooting, over 100 mobile units of police and Rangers, supported by armored cars, surrounded the area and started a house-to-house search. Thirty-five people were arrested, including four who were identified as members of Tehreek-e-Taliban and the banned religious terrorist organization, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. The police claim to have recovered a large quantity of weapons and "chemicals." The Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP), Babar Khattak claimed "We had a tip-off that a terrorist group was planning major terror activities in the city, and was hiding in Sohrab Goth and Orangi Town."

¶3. (C) No police officer has gone on record criticizing the ISI, but several have voiced displeasure about the poor planning, information sharing and execution of this operation which, they feel, resulted in the killing and wounding of so many officers. While finger-pointing is common after such an event, on a tactical (and maybe operational) level, the security forces were outclassed by their intended targets. The ISI and AVCU personnel on the scene told their police

back-up to stay out of sight while the five of them went forward in an unmarked and unarmored car. The ISI personnel were identified by armed men and when the police responded to the sound of shooting, they too were engaged. Thirteen of the ISI and police were killed or wounded. Their adversaries, evidently, suffered no casualties. If this was, in fact, a hostage rescue, it was a dismal failure. If it was an effort to disrupt a terrorist group who were planning attacks in the city, as claimed by the IGP, it was very costly.

¶4. (S/NF) A law enforcement source said it was his understanding that reports of ISI involvement were accurate. He made no mention of any "chemicals," items overtly related to terrorist activity or planning, or known terrorists, having been found during the round-up that took place after the shooting. He said this was a criminal gang engaged in kidnapping and some of the proceeds may be going to terrorist groups in the north.

¶5. (S/NF) The head of Sindh's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) told Post the criminal gang involved in the shooting is from Waziristan agency and the tribal-belt of Mohmand agency. He said they are working for Baitullah Mehsood and Tehreek-e-Taliban. He said the groups have turned to kidnapping and bank robbery because they are getting less funding from donations and through religious campaigns. He noted that the ISI agents were using a GPS system, connected to a laptop computer, as they drove towards their target building. Their car was stopped by six armed boys. According to this source, the car they were driving obviously did not belong in the area. The ISI agents proffered an excuse for their presence but one of the boys spotted the laptop and said to the others "These guys are ISI. They are here to get the Mujahadeen; kill them." The boys ran as they shot and this is why no one in the first car was killed. Most injuries were to the legs. The responding

KARACHI 00000067 002.2 OF 002

police officers were fired at by men in the upper-floors of buildings around the scene. This was confirmed by the presence of empty shell-casings. This secondary engagement resulted in the deaths and most of the injuries. It is quite possible the police did not get a chance to fire back.

¶6. (C) Comment: It has not been possible to confirm if there is any hard evidence that this gang was involved in the November 2008 kidnapping of the Iranian diplomat. Likewise, there is no independent corroboration of the claim they were operationally involved in a plan to conduct terrorist activity in Karachi. It is quite reasonable that ISI and ACVU would cooperate in an operation to disrupt persons involved in violent crime, the proceeds of which are helping to fund terrorist activity (terrorist funding is often connected to criminal gang activity in Karachi). More significant than the object of the operation, is the fact that it was so poorly executed it that it could be disrupted by six boys. If the boys had been given just slightly better training, it is most likely all the ISI and ACVU agents would have been killed. We have no way of knowing if the 35 persons rounded up after the shooting were in any way involved. End Comment.

FAKAN